College Lib
PR
6025
M11tw

THE LIBRARY
OF
THE UNIVERSITY
OF CALIFORNIA
LOS ANGELES

Wm. Fayerman.

THE TWO BLIND COUNTRIES

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

NOVELS

THE LEE SHORE
ABBOTS VERNEY
THE VALLEY CAPTIVES
THE FURNACE
THE SECRET RIVER
VIEWS AND VAGABONDS

THE TWO BLIND COUNTRIES

BY

ROSE MACAULAY

LONDON
SIDGWICK & JACKSON, LTD.
1914

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2007 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation

http://www.archive.org/details/twoblindcountrie00macaiala

College
Library
PR
6025
M11tw

TO

J. I. S.

982455

NOTE

A good many of these poems have appeared before in *The Saturday Westminster*, one in *The Spectator*, and one in *The Cambridge Magazine*. I have to thank the editors of these papers for permission to reprint them.

R. M.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
The Alien	1
Trinity Sunday	3
Keyless	5
The Devourers	7
The Thief	9
St. Mark's Day	11
The Door	13
The Losers	15
Cards	17
Summons	18
The City on the Lee Shore	21
Three	23
Epiphany	27
Emptiness	28
Foregrounds	29
On Crying for the Moon	31
The Black Armies	32
Fear	34
The Tramps' Highway	36
Moonrise	38

CONTENTS

	PAGE
MURDER	39
THE FLAME	40
COMPLETION	41
A LIGURIAN VALENTINE	44
A CITY IN THE NORTH	45
SONG OF THE LITTLE FLEET	46
TURNING BACK	48
PEACE AND THE BUILDER	50
THE DEBT	51
TWO HYMNS FOR ST. ANDREW'S DAY	52
HANDS	55
THE NEW YEAR	57
THE OLD YEAR	58

THE ALIEN

Mazily wandering through a blind land,
As a sailor gropes a strange shore,
Continually would he stop and stand,
His ear to a door.

Shadows and droll shapes thronged him about,
But he cared no whit for them all;
He, all alone in that crazy rout,
Heard through the wall.

As the sea beats on a fog-bound beach
A clamorous whispering broke,
And against the shaken door surged the muffled speech
Of a world of folk.

But and if they called him they were not heard,
And he might cry to them in vain;
Between them and him not the least small word
Could pass again.

Only through a crack in the door's blind face
He would reach a thieving hand,
To draw some clue to his own strange place
From the other land.

But his closed hand came back emptily,
As a dream drops from him who wakes;
And naught might he know but how a muffled sea
In whispers breaks.

* * * * *

On either side of a gray barrier
The two blind countries lie;
But he knew not which held him prisoner,
Nor yet know I.

TRINITY SUNDAY

As I walked in Petty Cury on Trinity Day,
While the cuckoos in the fields did shout,
Right through the city stole the breath of the may,
And the scarlet doctors all about

Lifted up their heads to snuff at the breeze,
And forgot they were bound for Great St. Mary's
To listen to a sermon from the Master of Caius,
And " How balmy," they said, " the air is !"

And balmy it was ; and the sweet bells rocking
Shook it till it rent in two
And fell, a torn veil ; and like maniacs mocking
The wild things from without peered through.

Wild wet things that swam in King's Parade
The days it was a marshy fen,
Through the rent veil they did sprawl and wade
Blind bog-beasts and Ugrian men.

And the city was not. (For cities are wrought
Of the stuff of the world's live brain.
Cities are thin veils, woven of thought,
And thought, breaking, rends them in twain.)

And the fens were not. (For fens are dreams
  Dreamt by a race long dead;
And the earth is naught, and the sun but seems:
  And so those who know have said.)

So veil beyond veil illimitably lifted:
  And I saw the world's naked face,
Before, reeling and baffled and blind, I drifted
  Back within the bounds of space.

* * * * *

I have forgot the unforgettable.
  All of honey and milk the air is.
God send I do forget. . . . The merry winds swell
  In the scarlet gowns bound for St. Mary's.

KEYLESS

Like a lost child my strayed soul drifted
Back from the lit, intelligible ways
Into the old, dim, environing maze
Where remote passions and shadows shifted.

At the cold breath that the dawn set stirring
My clear thought shrivelled, and shudderingly curled
Back from the gray, inexplicable world
That thrust a soft hand through casements, blurring

The dark and the dream; and with strange faces
Faint brown pictures from a blue wall
Peered at me palely; and solemn, small
Voices ticked, elf-like, from hidden places.

And life was a strange tongue long unspoken,
Difficult, unimaginable. . . .
(So might the lost souls grope in hell
For some known word, and find all broken.)

The earth hummed low, like a big top spinning,
And my soul was a shivering drift of dust
Caught and held in the small cold gust
That creeps to and fro in the dawn's beginning.

Breathing soft breaths the gray world waited
(Swung between the night and the new strange
light)
For the opening door to give to sight
The incomprehensible, dim, fast-gated

House of day, so crazy and dusty.
The dawn wind dropped. The gray turned blue.
Sudden in the paddock the old cock crew,
As if a key shrieked in a lock grown rusty. . . .

THE DEVOURERS

Cambridge town is a beleaguered city;
For south and north, like a sea,
There beat on its gates, without haste or pity,
The downs and the fen country.

Cambridge towers, so old, so wise,
They were builded but yesterday,
Watched by sleepy gray secret eyes
That smiled as at children's play.

Roads south of Cambridge run into the waste,
Where learning and lamps are not,
And the pale downs tumble, blind, chalk-faced,
And the brooding churches squat.

Roads north of Cambridge march through a plain
Level like the traitor sea.
It will swallow its ships, and turn and smile again—
The insatiable fen country.

Lest the downs and the fens should eat Cambridge up,
And its towers be tossed and thrown,
And its rich wine drunk from its broken cup,
And its beauty no more known—

Let us come, you and I, where the roads run
blind,
Out beyond the transient city,
That our love, mingling with earth, may find
Her imperishable heart of pity.

THE THIEF

When the paths of dream were mist-muffled,
And the hours were dim and small
(Through still nights on wet orchard grass
Like rain the apples fall),
Then naked-footed, secretly,
The thief dropped over the wall.

Apple-boughs spattered mist at him,
The dawn was as cold as death,
With a stealthy joy at the heart of it,
And the stir of a small sweet breath,
And a robin breaking his heart on song
As a young child sorroweth.

The thief's feet bruised wet lavender
Into sweet sharp surprise;
The orchard, full of pears and joy,
Smiled like a gold sunrise;
But the blind house stared down on him
With strange, white-lidded eyes.

He stood at the world's secret heart
In the haze-wrapt mystery;
And fat pears, mellow on the lip,
He supped like a honey-bee;
But the apples he crunched with sharp white teeth
Were pungent, like the sea.

And this was the oldest garden joy,
  Living and young and sweet.
And the melting mists took radiance,
  And the silence a rhythmic beat,
For the day came stealing stealthily,
  A thief, upon furtive feet.

And the walls that ring this world about
  Quivered like gossamer,
Till he heard, in the other worlds beyond,
  The other peoples stir,
And met strange, sudden, shifting eyes
  Through the filmy barrier. . . .

ST. MARK'S DAY

They saw Dolly Denver in the porch last night
(Joe and his young lady, Kate)—
Saw her, like a shadow in the queer gray light,
Flitting through the churchyard gate.

There were sick men, and babies, and old tired folk,
All flitting by for to die;
But to see Dolly Denver was an ugly joke,
And just to make Dolly cry.

There's no one now believes those old queer tales,
As they used to when Gran was young;
And young Dolly Denver never aches nor ails,
Nor the law won't have women hung.

But they and their lie, they've made Dolly cry;
I heard her in the yard just now,
As she hung out the clothes for the west wind to dry,
Sobbing so she didn't heed how

The blown apple-bough set the light line swinging
Up and down, and tossed her dad's shirt
Over the blackthorn hedge, and then went flinging
The clean pinnies down into the dirt.

Dolly's but a girl, and girls haven't sense;
A man 'ud never heed such folly.
I laughed at her over the sticky larch fence,
And said, "Who's down-hearted, Dolly?"

And Dolly sobbed at me, "They saw you, too!"
(And so the liars said they had,
Though I've not wasted paper nor rhymes telling you),
And, "Well," said I, "*I'm* not sad.

"But since you and me must die within the year,
What if we went together
To make cowslip balls in the fields, and hear
The blackbirds whistling to the weather?"

So in the water-fields till blue mists rose
We loitered, Dolly and I,
And pulled wet kingcups where the cold brook goes,
And when we've done living, we'll die.

* * * * *

They saw Dolly Denver and me last night
(Joe and his young lady, Kate),
Crouching to watch, with their hearts full of spite,
In the dusk by the churchyard gate.

THE DOOR

We piled the crackling brushwood sticks,
With the dead brown stalks of fern,
Into a heap, and lighted six
Matches to make it burn.

And I stood on the windward side,
And you upon the lee;
The blue smoke drifted like a tide
Ebbing to you from me.

Through eddying wreaths I saw your eyes
Narrowed, as if you were
In mirth, or pain, or sharp surprise,
Or fear too keen to bear.

The hazel leaves had a stir and thrill
As if they watched men die;
And the centuries tumbled at a shrill,
Sharp, long-forgotten cry.

The lit twigs cracked, the flame put out
A quivering glutton's tongue;
The cruel beech-trees pressed about
To see you burn so young.

The red fire leapt and lit your face;
I winced—you were so white
To have come once more to the ancient place
Of red pain and black night.

But sudden the flaming gates of hell
  That had opened, closed again;
For, breaking through the still trees, fell
  Big-dropped, the blessed rain.

And hell's door and time's door
  They both crashed to together,
And the devil's oven was no more
  Than a bonfire spoilt by weather.

The great drops hurrying through the trees
  Were like the noise of feet,
As if back through the centuries
  A strayed hour beat retreat.

* * * * *

I heard you speak from miles away—
  A strange, far, hollow sound.
You said it was no use to stay,
  The bonfire was quite drowned.

THE LOSERS

The soft dust on the by-roads
  Is shaken and stirred
By the shuffling feet of a listless folk.
  But no sound is heard,
For they slouch along, a tired trail,
  With never a song or word.

The days they walked the high road,
  With its sun, dust, and sweat,
Its hope and its pride, are a dim dream
  That they will soon forget.
All for the fields of slumber
  Their feet are set.

But, as they slouch on drowsily,
  They shall quiet joys find—
Boots without heels, jars without jam,
  And gnawed cheese-rind,
And pilchard-tins, with one or two
  Fish-tails left behind.

And glad they are to have left climbing
  The difficult way—
Glad no more to sweat and strive,
  No more obey;
Yea, all but glad the goal was not
  For such as they.

(Lost souls, they say, from Michael's gate
  Turn back in such wise.
Forgetful of the ecstasy
  Of the strange, steep skies,
Down poppied paths to the silent lands
  They slope, with blind eyes.)

Peace waits to take them utterly
  For a little space;
They must go shambling down the hill
  To the dim, still place,
Where, stretched at ease, they shall forget
  They have run and lost a race.

* * * * *

The gray dust on the by-roads
  Is shuffled and blurred
By the dragging feet of beaten men,
  And a quiet sound is heard—
A drawing of slow breath, as if
  A thousand sleepers stirred.

CARDS

Four candle flames shook in a stir of air;
Four moths drifted to death from out the night;
Four players sat in a soft circle of light
In a dim lily-illumined garden, where
Small sweet winds wandered. White in the rosy flare
Your thin quick hands flung slippery cards about;
And you smiled, innocent of the furtive rout
Of shadowy things sidling behind your chair.

But, like swords clashing, my love on their hate
Struck sharp, and drove, and pushed. . . . Grimly round you
Fought we that fight, they pressing passionate
Into the lit circle which called and drew
Shadows and moths of night. . . . I held the gate.
You said, "Our game," more truly than you knew.

SUMMONS

Little grey sea-waves lightly shiver and beat—
Beat on a blind earth, shiver to the sea.
But where are ye
That pierced the pale sleep veils with echoing feet,
And thin strange voices clamouring wistfully,
And hammering hands that beat on a shut door?
The dawn waves strike the shore,
And shiver vanquished seaward. But no more
The dim verge quivers with the soft-foot bands;
They have crept back into the spaceless lands.

In the dim halls,
Beyond the ultimate shadows of our night,
There is no light.
Gray looming walls
Brood inaccessible and bald and blind;
The secret corridors between them wind,
Full of the rhythmic beat
Of soft, innumerable, passionless feet.

What now if thou shouldst hear
My crying break along those lanes of fear?
If my love, burning luminous like a star,
Should be to thee a light
Immortal within this mortal tabernacle
Wherein I blindly dwell—
A candle among shadows, drawing thee near,

Drawing thee me-ward from the spaceless sphere
(Where is no near, no far),
Even to the blurred rims of this our night—
If my great need, crying continually,
Should break the gates that bound eternity—
If thou, wending at last the way to me,
At the road's end should find
A dim place, gray and blind,
And sad, and still, and all unlit for thee—
What if this ultimate bitterness should be?

O may-hedge, glimmer!
And foam of the cow-parsley
Hold the silver moon's shimmer;
And let the chestnut-tree
Lift high a thousand candles to light him to me!

Into the wan waste places
These, the world's lights, shall go,
And passion in passionless spaces
Shall throb as a flame, and glow:
Till, as moths drift to fire,
Thou shalt drift slow
Down the dim ways where shadows sway an flow,
Out of the waste unto my lit desire.

God has made of the lilac's breath,
And the sweet of the clover,
A wine shall conquer death,
A honey for the lover.

By the wild sprays of the white thorn
Shadows of dreams are pierced, are torn,
And the may shall discover
(Through the fragile shell)
The secret, imperishable
Heart of mortality
That death wraps over.

Oh, I have built a lovely tabernacle,
That therein we
This night may dwell.

* * * * *

The dawn waves always break and shiver and beat
(Softly, like coming feet),
And steal with a long sighing to the sea. . . .

THE CITY ON THE LEE SHORE

Like a cup holding the twilight the dim shore lies,
Beyond the blue boglands and the broad winds' wheeling.
The gray verge is mystical with shadows stealing:
Follow the singing winds to where the last light dies!

Down the blue buoyant shipways adventure no more,
For the ports of desire are remote and hidden;
Drop hope, the peaceless pilot, and drive storm-ridden
Where winds and tides make an end, upon the lee shore.

Here is no toil of questing, no hurt of desire,
For here sleep the weary dreams, a crew disbanded;
And here their stranded captains smile, empty-handed,
And pile their wrecked cargoes to make a little fire.

Drowned in the blue smoke-wreathing the stars fade and pale;
The sea's edge ebbs, unimaginably drifting;
And the world is made new by the silent lifting
And shadowy dissolving of veil behind veil—

Till, built of the smoke's pale eddies, mystic
walls rise,
And, lo! on the shore an impregnable city
S preads encircling arms, like a mother in pity;
And there, within the guarding walls, the last
wind dies.

THREE

In the chalk heart of Cambridgeshire
Breathless I lay,
Through the hot, still, passionless
August midday;
And the spires of the blue city
Shimmered, miles away.

In the long grass and tall nettles
I lay abed,
With hawthorn and bryony
Tangled o'erhead.
And I was alone with Hobson,
Two centuries dead.

Hidden by sprawling brambles
The Nine Waters were;
From a chalky bed they bubbled up,
Clean, green, and fair.
And I was alone with Hobson,
Whose ghost walks there.

And though the brooding noonday lay
Dreadfully still,
Like an ogre dreaming after food
On the hot chalk hill,
Deep at its heart there stirred the pulse
Of a live, bad will.

Some stealthy life was hidden there,
And it was not mine,
Nor Hobson's, that good carrier,
Crafty and benign,
Nor his grey mare sucking ghostishly
At the waters nine.

Some evil life was throbbing there,
Quite close to me,
But not the guzzling water-rats
Beneath the may-tree,
Nor the moorhens that flapped and dipped
Clear and plain to see.

The thinning veils of silence shook
As if they must part
At the stealthy stir of the secret thing
In the noonday's heart.
And the thought I had was of bitter tea
And cold apple-tart.

And something yawned, and from the grass
A head upreared;
And I was not alone with Hobson,
For at me leered
A great, gaunt, greasy tramp
With a golden beard.

He had a beard like a dandelion,
And I had none;
He had tea in a beer-bottle,
Warm with the sun;
He had pie in a paper bag,
Not yet begun.

So he fell to and feasted well,
Nor spared anything;
He lay and dined heavily,
Like a satyr king,
In the chalk heart of Cambridgeshire,
Where the Nine Wells spring.

And his soul held no pity
For the poor like me;
He was an evil, ragged man
Without charity,
For he gave me never a bite of pie
Nor a sup of tea.

And when he had done dining
He lay down and slept.
At the noise of his deep snoring
The small frogs leapt,
And over him I and Hobson
Still vigil kept.

In the chalk heart of Cambridgeshire
    We three lay,
Through the silent, passionless
    Brooding midday;
And the spires of the blue city
    Were four miles away.

EPIPHANY

The rain has dropped its veils over a blind country,
And is hushing the young, young year with soft singing,
Lest he wake, lest he wake, and see a star springing,
And break his heart for so white an Epiphany,
And launch his cockle-shell boat on a dawn-gray sea,
Because the pale son of the morning manifest
Leadeth the morning's sons on a wandering quest:
After a star do they sail continually.

But he shall lie close, the young year, to his mother,
And the encircling of her arms shall round his days;
He shall have benison of the Sun, her brother,
Nor fear her sister the Moon with any amaze;
And earth and sky, leaning gently one to other,
Shall flood with healing waters the fire of the ways.

EMPTINESS

I HAVE seen, he said, the sunless, soundless spaces
That shall be after the world has been,
When the winds sweep clean
The empty valleys and gray, quiet places.

I have trodden ashes, pale as sand, and shifting
In wind-caught eddies, that once were fire;
For the lamps of desire
Are blown and die, and the dust goes drifting. . .

But on the gray waste's rim, against Time's pale portal,
Two deathless flames burn, still, passionate
(They shall sear hell's gate):
The white flame, like a star, of beauty immortal;
The red flame, like a sword, of unperishing hate.

FOREGROUNDS

THE pleasant ditch is a milky way,
So alight with stars it is,
And over it breaks, like pale sea-spray,
The laughing cataract of the may
In luminous harmonies.
(Cloak with a flower-wrought veil
The face of the dream-country.
The fields of the moon are kind, are pale,
And quiet is she.)

The jolly donkeys that love me well
Nuzzle with thistly lips;
The harebell is song made visible,
The dandelion's lamp a miracle,
When the day's lamp dips and dips.
(Oh night, be a purple veil
O'er the waste dream-country,
Where the candles of earth do fade, do fail,
And no lights be.)

I will weave, of the clear clean shapes of things,
A curtain to shelter me;
I will paint it with kingcups and sunrisings,
And glints of blue for the swallow's wings,
And green for the apple-tree.
(Oh, a whisper has pierced the veil
Out of the dream-country,
As a wind moans in the straining sail
Of a ship lost at sea.)

I will have Colour to be my guide,
And Light for my cheery friend,
And three abreast we will bravely ride,
And love and plunder the good wayside,
Down to the brief road's end.
(Then may I lift the veil,
And enter the dream country,
While the round world hums like the far-off tale
Of a foolish bee?)

ON CRYING FOR THE MOON

"Lavender, sweet as charity,
Fills all the garden ways;
The bees, drunk with the clover wine
Make music of the days.
Oh, hide thy face in rosemary,
Oh, bind thine eyes with rue. . . ."
"But in a white night, a wan night,
A pale light grew. . . ."

"The winds play in the apple-trees,
And tumble on the ground
Pomona's babies, chubby-cheeked,
Happy and red and round.
Oh, little brother, look and laugh,
All sweet things wish thee well. . . ."
"But in a deep wood, a dim wood,
A white fruit fell. . . ."

"The earth, spinning so giddily,
Carries us past regret.
She hums a tune, like a honey-bee,
'Haste onwards and forget!'
See, little brother, they dance for thee,
The stars in a silver crowd. . . ."
"In a still hour, a secret hour,
Their lady bowed. . . ."

THE BLACK ARMIES

Oh, the south wind brings comfort,
And the west wind brings the rain,
And the wind that drives through the golden gates
Brings hope to the earth again.

Though the sea-wind sings of broken ships
On dim, drowned sands,
And wails of the waste waters
That cover the lost lands,
And the moon-wind's great with pity
For the burden of the night—
You may turn your face to all of these,
For they are the winds of light.

But when, in the heart of silence
That throbs not at all
(So still she lies, the waiting earth,
Asleep beneath her pall)—
Oh, when in the gray willow-tops
An evil sound you hear
That is like to the hustling tread
Of a legion drunk with fear,
Bury your eyes, be deaf, be blind,
Nor ever face about,
Lest you chance to see the wicked things
That the black wind puts to rout.

(Oh, the blessed winds, have pity
  For all under moon and sun,
But not for the broods of darkness
  That into the silence run.
And ye shall pray, of your charity,
  For all on the earth's face,
And for the souls, if souls there be,
  In any other place:
But ye may not pray for the black armies
  That chase above the trees,
For earth's pity and heaven's pity
  Is all too strait for these.)

FEAR

The white road of their pilgrimage,
Running through fields in spring,
Broke at a gate in a hazel hedge,
And left them there, at a dim wood's edge
(And a wood is a live thing).

The sun, their friend through the placid land,
Had sunk in a sea of gold,
And the wind from the woods was a soft hand
Pushing. . . . (And how shall dead souls stand
A live wood's hold?)

The little brown paths ran in and out,
And they were afraid of these.
(Men have lost their souls, they did not doubt,
In the secret ways that twist about
The roots of the trees.)

I see them sit, I hear them sigh,
And shake at the owl's call,
Under the wise night's watching eye.
(The great red moon that climbs the sky
And smiles, knowing all.)

Nor back they turn, nor on they go;
They deem it the world's end.
(Of a myriad pilgrims, how few know
The way the shadows sway and flow
In the heart of the woods when the winds blow
And the birch-trees bend!)

A myriad pilgrims, when these be dust,
Shall stay their journeying here,
And watch the moon rise red as rust
Over the earth they may not trust
(Because of fear).

THE TRAMPS' HIGHWAY

All along the road's edge the grass is gray
With blown dust, but black in rings
Where men cooked their dinners in pots yesterday;
And they've each left a lot of things

For the ones walking after (if they look about)—
A clean-licked apple-pie dish,
A treacle-pot, with the treacle cleaned out,
And boots a soul in hell wouldn't wish.

All along the road's edge it may be seen
That the tramps have trailed ahead in line,
Dropping their leavings to show they have been,
And to cheer up poor hearts like mine.

From Cambridge to London the gray stones say
There are four-and-fifty miles of dust:
A pleasant road to walk, for those that may,
But dullish for the ones that must.

From Cambridge to Trumpington men walk beneath
The shadow of the chestnut-trees;
From Trumpington to Shelford they call it the heath,
And it is bare to sun and breeze.

From Shelford to Sawston, from Sawston on,
  Through Pampisford, Chesterford, Epping,
Each grey stone is another mile gone ;
  And if a man tires with stepping,

High above the road the wire makes a song,
  To hush a drowsy tramp to sleep.
In the boot-strewn ditch he will perhaps sleep
    long ;
  Among jam-pots he may sleep deep.

MOONRISE

"WHICH road to the fen inn?" "You follow me,
And you'll find out before the moon gets up."
"How far to go? How long before we sup?"
"Why that, young man, will be as it will be."
"The dim downs heave and tumble like the sea;
The great wind raves like waves on a hidden shore;
The climbing moon flames red at the night's door—
She'll soon break in. . . . How near to bed are we?"
"A short way, a short way, impatient sir;
You shall sleep sound anon, and the moon's light
Shall wake you not, nor shall the shiver and stir
Of winds break in upon your quiet night. . . .
This is the inn; I am the inn-keeper;
I choked you a mile back, for greed and spite."

MURDER

"Are you quite near? There was a sound of going,
And sudden alarm struck coldly through my dream."
"You heard the whispering run of the dark stream,
And the night wind through the gray willows blowing."
"Does the wind creep like furtive feet tiptoeing?"
"Yea, very like." "I dreamt of a dim rout
Of stealthy shades that quietly stole about. . . ."
"That was the murmurous river flowing, flowing."
"Put out your hand. Its touch is cold on mine."
"Through the wide casement steals the chilling air."
"Your whispering voice sounds distant and malign;
Like grass on a dewy night is your strange hair. . . .
Speak, speak. . . ." "Peace, fool; he will not speak again.
I speak for him who has been an hour slain."

THE FLAME

The dawn is secret and gray, for the willows weave it
Of a dim dream and pale water-light.
Very still the dream flows, having for motion
The swaying the reeds make through the night.

When through the faint darkness the sharp sword stabs, piercing
With its bitter point the gray sleep veils,
And valour, faith, and desire are three spent candles,
And the spirit's torch gutters and fails—
Then is a lamp lit, to keep illumined vigil
Among dead lights, and your soul for mine
Flames, a still torch, ardent and unswerving;
And, as in dim waters stars shine,
So your deathless lamp throws a downward image,
Till my dream like the gray stream flows
Tranquil and glad, and holds deep the flame's burning,
A radiant, reed-swayed rose.

COMPLETION

He, the young pilgrim, seeking grave still spaces,
Came to the quiet places
Where hills hollowed a cup for streams to brim
With blue wine to the rim,
Blue wine and shadows, while the stars grew dim.
Holding the dawn, the illumined cup filled slowly
With serene things and holy;
With pale feet shadow-set the hill saints past;
The blue dim earth-girdles melted at last
Into heaven's luminous
Limitless walls. Dawn for the pilgrim thus
Built a house full of the pale wings of prayer.
Faintly he, standing there,
Heard bells that chimed, climbing the luminous air
From the deep, citied valleys,
That, each a dew-brimmed chalice,
Held shadows at the foot of dawn's steep stair.

Yet was he not content, for a voice said:
"Thou hast a way to tread
Into the heart of one more lit than thee
With heaven's clear mystery.
See where that opal targe
Glints with a secret smile from marge to marge,
Because he knows that rocks in a white morn
Prick sharp to heaven, spraying like winter thorn;
Because, when Light is born,

She leans to him the splendour of her breast,
Till, at her last behest,
The porter of the Temple of the West
Flings gold gates wide and shows
The Altar of the Rose,
Blooming for him, for him, and well he knows
That in him now his holy of holies glows.

" He, a blue darkness, staring at the moon,
Shakes with delightful fear,
Her round wheel, turning, hums in him so near.
The stars slide down to him, and he may hear
Their tinkle of strange laughter in his ear:
He ripples to the tune.

" Bend to him now, and surely shalt thou be
One with the heaven he so smiles to hold.
Lean to his breast, and haply shalt thou see
The secret petals of his rose unfold.
Trust to his arms; the sleep he gives to thee
Holds dreams of a deep laughter yet untold,
The heart of peace, an opal purity,
Young as the dawn, old as the stars are old."

When on the dim blue cup and the cragged height
That took the dawn, the cool still hands of night
Were laid, holding from sight
The bitter rocks, the many-hued delight,
The paths of wandering,
What news then of the pilgrim's journeying?

Over the cup of dreams the mists hung blind.
Had he found splendour, as he sought to find?
Or was his submerged dreaming
All of pale fishes gleaming
Through reeds that shivered and sang on a weedy floor,
And small waves lapping upon a dim gray shore,
With a sound like hands beating on a blind door?
. . . He dreams, he dreams, but may tell his dreams no more.

A LIGURIAN VALENTINE

On wet sands now the stars are gray,
What do the brown nets hold for keeping?
Will you these from the rock-green bay?

Sweeter to breathe than flowers in May
Is the silver the nets are heaping
On wet sands, now the stars are gray.

Surely now I have heard you say
You love the little bianchetti leaping:
Will you these from the rock-green bay?

And seven tunnies enmeshed at play
Dance, because of my water-sweeping,
On wet sands, now the stars are gray.

This is my wooing and this my way:
Will you garner my night's sea-reaping?
Will you these from the rock-green bay?

Small bianchetti my vows shall pay—
Silver things between meshes peeping,
On wet sands, now the stars are gray.
Will you these from the rock-green bay?

A CITY IN THE NORTH

THE rain that does not tire is on the city.
Over all sin is drawn the cloak of pity;
Over streets black like death, flame red like hell.

Black streets, red flame, fade in a mist of sorrow.
"The past lies drowned; the slow drops choke
the morrow"
(Hope lifts her lying voice)—"So all is well."

Oh, shame of life beneath the cloak of pity!
. . . The rain that does not tire is on the city.

SONG OF THE LITTLE FLEET

The moon's afloat, a lamplit boat,
Where reeds shake and sing;
Around her dip, ship jostling ship,
The stars voyaging.
Who bends his ear may haply hear
A strange thing and sweet:
Thin voices chime in water-time,
And thus sing the fleet:

"The earth is good, with hill and wood,
A wide place and fair;
When we look down on field and town,
We would fain voyage there.
Of the dark sea our keels were free,
But we loved earth best;
So earth did make us roads and take
Our ships to her breast.
And now we ride in shivering pride
Down dim lanes and blue,
And owls cry 'Whit! There rides the fleet!'
And 'Luck go with you-ou-ou!'
The pure sweet thorn that takes the morn
Breathes dreams all the night;
But when she pales, then furl we sails,
And, wisht! sink from sight."

The stream runs gray before the day,
The reeds shake and sing;
Among them slip and quiver and dip
Ripples voyaging.

Who bends his ear perchance may hear
  A sad thing and sweet—
Thin voices chime in water-time:
  But where sails the fleet?

TURNING BACK

(*A Duologue.*)

"As a sad sailor putteth out to sea,
Loving the lit towns as mariners will,
And the land's strangeness and sweet mystery
Drown in green deeps as the moaning winds fill
The sails, and speed him out of port, so we
Launch blind from the lit shores that call us still."

"Nay, as a tramp, having paused a while to still
His thirst for life, as boundless as the sea,
Must leave the inn and tread the road, and fill
His grimy part, sans joy, sans mystery
(For nothing new he finds, and nothing will,
Save dust and ashes and broken bread), so we."

"But yesterday a door swung wide, and we
Striking thereon, did push it wider still,
And through it stole the sharp smell of the sea,
And lavender, and we breathed deep to fill
Our souls with joy, so sweet a mystery
Lurked beyond walls, to be disclosed at will."

"We never trod that place, nor ever will.
Poor slaves jerked sharply from the threshold, we.
Those hidden paths lie strange and far and still,
Breathing of rosemary by a shadowed sea.
Now the way's dust blows harsh and gray, to fill
Our eyes, and blind us to that mystery."

"Our feet may tread no paths of mystery.
Time mocks the pitiful motions of a will
Whose deeds, like shot sea-birds into the sea,
Fall wounded to oblivion; cold and still
Checked passion drops and dies; dry-throated we
Set down the wine-cup that we might not fill."

"Here's to the old known road; come, take your fill
Of water and bread and dust. Oh, mystery
Of use that drives us crosswise to our will,
And spills and wastes the blessed wine that we
Drew forth like gods from out the Elysian still
Of passionate days by a sun-sweet wood and sea!"

"Wine like the sea shall one day flow and fill
Even to our will our cups with mystery."
"Sad tipplers we; though drunk, we shall thirst still."

PEACE AND THE BUILDER

"If I should build a house of ivory,
Paved with ripe cedar-wood, smelling of myrrh,
Wouldst thou come in to dwell, O wanderer?"
"Nay; the long winds swing singing from the sea,
And the night holds no house for thee and me.
Out of the wreck of the wind-riven years,
The shattered ways, the old dust dark with tears,
I come; night holds no house for me and thee."

"If I should gather from the shattered ways
The bitter dust, the broken stones of hope
(They shine like fallen stars in the moon's blaze),
And build my house of these on the dim slope,
Wouldst come, pale wanderer? The door stands
wide."
"I come; the winds sleep on the hill's long side."

THE DEBT

When in the pretty wood
The larches spurtle red for the year's turning,
Then in men's moving blood
Sweet April does set frolic fires a-burning.

But now, since the trees stand
Naked and deep asleep, yet nathless yearning
For the spring's kindling hand,
Let youth go forth, and set the woods a-burning.

Such quick fire is in youth
(And this youth knows, having no other learning)
That where it moves, in truth,
Its touch shall set the dead earth's soul a-burning.

'Tis good all debts to pay;
So let youth thank the sweet year for his turning.
And newly every day
Go forth, go forth, to set the woods a-burning.

TWO HYMNS FOR ST. ANDREW'S DAY

I.

The round sun swings in thin green skies like to
a tumbling apricot;
Through the clear peace there shivers not a sound
except the sudden cries
Of men like birds on coral isles, a-singing in the
bread-fruit trees,
Of men like fish in opal seas, a-swimming round
with cruel smiles.
We cast our nets on the pale sea, being Christ's
patient fishermen,
Cast and draw in and cast again: with Him we
serve the issue be.
The world is like to gossamer, so thin, so light,
so pearly pale,
And ever just behind the veil strange joys do
wait, faint terrors stir.
We may not look, we dare not hear, though life
and death shall blaze to light
The sea by day, the sky by night, though flame-
red pain and ash-gray fear
Leap up and rush unleashed from hell, and rend
the veil and shriek like birds,
Or men that utter dreadful words of terror and
things untellable.

We are those Christ has crucified, and sent into
the bitter ways
To spill our blood and drown our days in the
sea's pitiless waste tide.
And as we drag God's wide blue cup for those
His souls that perish there,
In the fierce sun's unflickering stare our own
souls shrivel and parch up.

The red moon, like a devil's eye, breasts the dim
tide to mock our sleep;
To God beyond the unanswering deep, to Christ
our God, "How long?" we cry.

II.

When Andrew went a-fishing
All night in Galilee,
Dawn would bring him a heavy net,
Or five fish, or three:
It was just as the sea would have it,
And fisherman's luck, said he.

After, he went a-fishing
For wilder fish than of yore,
And many straining netfuls
He drew in to shore.
But at last they hung him crosswise—
Fisherman's luck once more.

There be many go a-fishing
'Twixt the poles and the Hebrides,
And the winds sing their elegy
To the shifting seas—
" Landsman's luck for landfarers,
And fisherman's luck for these."

Christ sends one man a-fishing
For brown folk in the isles,
Among the happy bread-fruit trees,
From Hawai to Hahils.
When the head-hunter runs him down,
" Fisherman's luck," he smiles.

Another goes a-fishing
For blacks in Zanzibar,
Where the swamps reek of poison-breath,
And the slave-raids are,
And all that the bitter years have won
Fisherman's luck may mar.

All ye that go a-fishing,
Know this of the patient art:
Eight nights' harvest may break your nets,
And the ninth break your heart.
Then on the dawn-tide tearlessly
With fisherman's luck depart.

HANDS

Seek no more fondly where the blind mists ride.
They wreathe pale dreams, fantastical and vain,
But wreathe no face for thee, O empty-eyed.

Things seen shall give no healing for old pain;
Things heard are windy music, the ear's pride;
And who shall make dead echoes live again,

Or strike old broken strings to melody?
O blind and sad, from whom the gods are fled,
Beauty no more shall strike thee visibly.

Yet reach out empty hands; be comforted.
Strange! Everywhere the old touch leaps to thee,
Holding thee fast, albeit the gods are dead.

Bluebells, laying light fingers into thine,
Bind thee to music's self; and the frail strands
And gray unfurling tendrils of the vine

Reach out to thee; and the may's pale sweet hands
Lay healing on thy lips; and the strong pine
With living touch comforts and holds who stands

In his blue shadow. The winds, eddying,
Lift thee to the old peace, and bear thee high
Over the valley of death. Yea, all the spring

Voiceless and invisible, holds thee by
Thousands of reaching hands, that bind and cling
About thee ; and, so cherished, thou shalt lie

On earth's breast, hearing no more vain tales told,
Being mocked no more by beauty's powerless power,
But held unstriving to the peace of old,

Till the blue dusk of the dim ultimate hour
Shall bring the strong pale hands that shall enfold
Thy body and soul, as the sheath folds the flower.

THE NEW YEAR

The ships go down to take the sea.
Who seeks the dawn-pale mystery
  That lies beyond the violet bays?
  What masts shall dip into the haze,
Slip through, to where the sea-lights be?

Oh, valiant young explorers we!
Of the dim seas hope makes us free:
  Into the dawn-gray water-ways
    The ships go down.

And none may know for what far quay
Their sails are set, or what their fee.
  Some bear rich freights through golden days;
  Some come to where the dim sea sways
And breaks, and, vanquished utterly,
    The ships go down.

THE OLD YEAR

The old sea-ways send up their tide;
The battered ships to harbour ride.
In the deep seas beyond the bar,
Where the great winds and waters are,
The drifting ships have dropped their pride.

When for the morning seas they plied,
Who but young Hope should be their guide,
To steer them through the rocks that scar
The old sea-ways?

Into the port they reel and slide,
So for a little space abide,
Waiting the gleam of the dawn-star
To seek new waters, strange and far.
But no more shall their keels divide
The old sea-ways.

PRINTED BY
BILLING AND SONS, LIMITED
GUILDFORD

[P.T.O.

FROM SIDGWICK & JACKSON'S LIST

UNIFORM WITH THIS VOLUME

POEMS. By RUPERT BROOKE. Crown 8vo., cloth. 2s. 6d. net. [*Second Edition.*

"Here is clearly a rich nature—sensuous, eager, brave—fighting eagerly towards the truth. And already Mr. Brooke can show now and then an almost uncanny accomplishment."—*Times.*

"It is a book of rare and remarkable promise."—*Spectator.*

POEMS. By R. C. PHILLIMORE. With an Introduction by JOHN MASEFIELD. Crown 8vo., cloth. 2s. 6d. net.

"Mr. Phillimore is a stimulating thinker, and more of a cunning artist than appears at first sight or hearing."—*Glasgow Herald.*

"His best is very good; and his volume is not one we can afford to miss."—*Oxford Magazine.*

FIRST POEMS. By MAX PLOWMAN. Crown 8vo., cloth. 2s. 6d. net.

"Remarkable for their freedom from any extravagance in manner and their quiet and thoughtful simplicity. . . . Like Mr. Robert Bridges he can attain curious rhythmic variations without losing repose."—*Spectator.*

"Here is first poetry that has both brains and vision—poetry, moreover, that has style."—*Daily News.*

FROM SIDGWICK & JACKSON'S LIST

JOHN MASEFIELD

THE EVERLASTING MERCY

Crown 8vo., cloth, 3s. 6d. net. Sixteenth Impression.
Also in Fcap. 8vo., leather bindings, 5s. net and 6s. net.

Sir J. M. Barrie recently described "The Everlasting Mercy," by JOHN MASEFIELD, as being "incomparably the finest literature of the year." This remarkable poem was awarded the Edmond de Polignac prize of £100 in November, 1912.

"Mr. Masefield is to be congratulated on a remarkable achievement—a vital portrait of a man, the drama of a great spiritual conquest, and many passages of high beauty."—*Spectator.*

"Here, beyond question, in 'The Everlasting Mercy,' is a great poem, as true to the essentials of its ancient art as it is astoundingly modern in its method; a poem, too, which 'every clergyman in the country ought to read as a revelation of the heathenism still left in the land.' . . . Its technical force is on a level with its high, inspiring thought. It makes the reader think; it goads him to emotion; and it leaves him alive with a fresh appreciation of the wonderful capacity of human nature to receive new influences and atone for old and apparently ineradicable wrongs."—ARTHUR WAUGH in *The Daily Chronicle.*

THE WIDOW IN THE BYE STREET.

Crown 8vo., cloth, 3s. 6d. net. [*Fourth Impression.*

"Mr. Masefield is no common realist, but universalizes his tragedy in the grand manner. . . . We are convinced that he is writing truly of human nature, which is the vital thing. . . . The last few stanzas show us pastoral poetry, in the very perfection of simplicity."—*Spectator.*

FROM SIDGWICK & JACKSON'S LIST

THE WILD HARP. A Selection from Irish Poetry. By KATHARINE TYNAN. Printed with Decorative Borders of Celtic design to every page, and a Title-page designed in Four Colours by Miss C. M. WATTS. Medium 8vo., designed, cloth gilt, 7s. 6d. net.

"A beautiful and notable book of Irish poetry. . . . Mr. Yeats, Mr. Russell ('A. E.'), Mr. Stephens, and Mr. Colum are leaders of the modern school who are well represented, whilst Mangan, Sir Samuel Ferguson, and Aubrey de Vere are, of course, among the posthumous contributors. The volume is beautifully decorated, and will make a charming gift-book." —*Standard.*

IRISH POEMS. By KATHARINE TYNAN. Super-royal 16mo., cloth, 3s. 6d. net.

LYRICS FROM ELIZABETHAN SONGBOOKS.

LYRICS FROM ELIZABETHAN DRAMATISTS. Edited by A. H. BULLEN. Each, fcap. 8vo., in various bindings, 1s. net to 3s. net.

"It is nearly a quarter of a century since Mr. Bullen first brought out these admirable anthologies. They are sure to enjoy a fresh lease of popularity in their new form, which is at once attractive and cheap."—*Spectator.*

"These books have lately become extremely difficult to get. . . . Therefore we welcome their reappearance in neat, cheap form with immense pleasure."—*Observer.*

GULLIVER'S VOYAGES to Lilliput and Brobdingnag. Illustrated by P. A. STAYNES. With 8 Colour Plates and over 80 Drawings in the Text, printed in two Colours throughout; decorated initials, title-page, and end-papers. Designed cloth extra, in coloured wrapper, 5s.

THE ORANGE CAT and Other Verses. By FFRIDA WOLFE. Illustrated by P. A. STAYNES. Demy 4to., picture boards, in colour throughout, 1s. 6d.

ROUNDABOUT WAYS. By FFRIDA WOLFE. Illustrated by P. A. STAYNES. Demy 4to., cloth, in colour throughout, 3s. 6d.

THE COCKATOO: a Story of Public School Life and Adventure. By MAX RITTENBERG. Illustrated. Crown 8vo. 5s.

UNDINE. By F. DE LA MOTTE FOUQUE. Translated by EDMUND GOSSE. With a Photogravure Frontispiece. Crown 8vo., cloth, 2s. 6d. net.

FOUR PLAYS FOR CHILDREN. By ETHEL SIDGWICK. (Thackeray's *The Rose and the Ring*, *The Goody-Witch*, *The Goose-Girl*, and *Boots and the North Wind*.) Crown 8vo., cloth, 2s. net.

THE NEW CHILD'S GUIDE TO KNOWLEDGE. By LAURENCE HOUSMAN. A Book of Poems and Moral Lessons. Illustrated by the AUTHOR. Crown 8vo., cloth, 2s. 6d. net. Ornamental paper wrappers, 1s. net.

[*Second Impression.*

SIDGWICK & JACKSON'S FICTION

PELLE THE CONQUEROR: Boyhood. By MARTIN ANDERSEN NEXÖ. Translated from the Danish by JESSIE MUIR. Crown 8vo., 6s.

"Novel readers in search of something out of the common will be grateful to the publishers and the very competent translator. . . . The detailed realism of the life at the farm is presented firmly and vividly." —*Spectator.*

THE THIRD MISS SYMONS. By F. M. MAYOR. With a Preface by JOHN MASEFIELD. Impl. 16mo., cloth gilt, 3s. 6d. net.

"Mr. Masefield has formed a high opinion of Miss Mayor's work, but nothing beyond what her art deserves."—*Glasgow Herald.*

THE TEMPLE ON THE HILL. A Tale of Transylvania. By ELSA DE SZASZ. Impl. 16mo., cloth gilt, 3s. 6d. net.

"The book is wonderful, and the English of it noble and simple."—*Pall Mall Gazette.*
"A vivid and arresting piece of work."—*Manchester Guardian.*
"This is a little book, but a great achievement."—*Englishwoman.*

THE CELESTIAL OMNIBUS: and other Stories. By E. M. FORSTER, author of "Howards End," etc. With cover design and end-papers by ROGER FRY. Impl. 16mo., cloth gilt, 3s. 6d. net. [*Second Impression.*

Messrs. SIDGWICK & JACKSON also publish

NOVELS by GEORGE GISSING, J. D. BERESFORD, ETHEL SIDGWICK, ROSALIND MURRAY, DIANA MEYRICK, GEORGE BARTRAM, A. S. TURBERVILLE, WILFRED HEMERY, HAROLD WILLIAMS, and many others.

PLAYS by GRANVILLE BARKER, LAURENCE HOUSMAN, STANLEY HOUGHTON, EDWARD GARNETT, LADY BELL, ELIZABETH BAKER, GITHA SOWERBY, ALLAN MONKHOUSE, GILBERT CANNAN, and many others.

Complete Lists on application.

Sidgwick & Jackson, Ltd., 3, Adam Street, London, W.C.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA LIBRARY, LOS ANGELES

COLLEGE LIBRARY

This book is due on the last date stamped below.

Book Slip–15*m*-8,'58(5890s4)4280

UCLA-College Library
PR 6025 M11tw
L 005 722 192 1

College
Library

PR
6025
M11tw

UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY
A 001 184 441 2